

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the first paragraph on page 1 with the following amended paragraph:

This application is a continuation-in-part of co-pending U.S. Patent Application 09/444,422, entitled "Network communications link," filed November 19, 1999, which is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application 08/992,934, filed December 7~~1~~7, 1997, entitled "Network Communications Link." Both of these applications are assigned to the assignee of the present patent application and are incorporated herein by reference.